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Illustrated English Social History: 2

G. M. Trevelyan



ILLUSTRATED ENGLISH SOCIAL HISTORY

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G. M. TREVELYAN

George Macaulay Trevelyan, O.M., C.B.E., F.B.A., born in 1876, was the third son of Sir George Otto Trevelyan and a great-nephew of Lord Macaulay. He was educated at Harrow and at Trinity College, Cambridge. In the First World War he was awarded the Silver Medal for Valour (Italy) and the Chevalier of the Order of St Maurice and St Lazarus (Italy).

He was an Hon. D.C.L., Oxford, and Hon. LL.D., St Andrews and Edinburgh, a Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, and an Honorary Fellow of Oriel College, Oxford. From 1927 to 1940 he was Regius Professor of Modern History at Cambridge and from 1940 to 1951 he was Master of Trinity. He was also a Trustee of the British Museum and the National Portrait Gallery. He was President of the Youth Hostels' Association from 1930 to 1950, and was Chairman of the Estates Committee of the National Trust. He died in 1962.

Among his books on British history are: *England in the Age of Wycliffe*, *England under the Stuarts*, *The English Revolution 1688*, *England under Queen Anne*, *British History in the Nineteenth Century*, and *History of England. Lord Grey of the Reform Bill*, *Lord Grey of Fallodon*, *The Life of Bright*, and the famous Garibaldi trilogy are his biographical works.

G. M. TREVELYAN

VOLUME TWO: THE AGE OF SHAKESPEARE AND THE
STUART PERIOD

WITH 139 ILLUSTRATIONS, SELECTED BY RUTH C. WRIGHT
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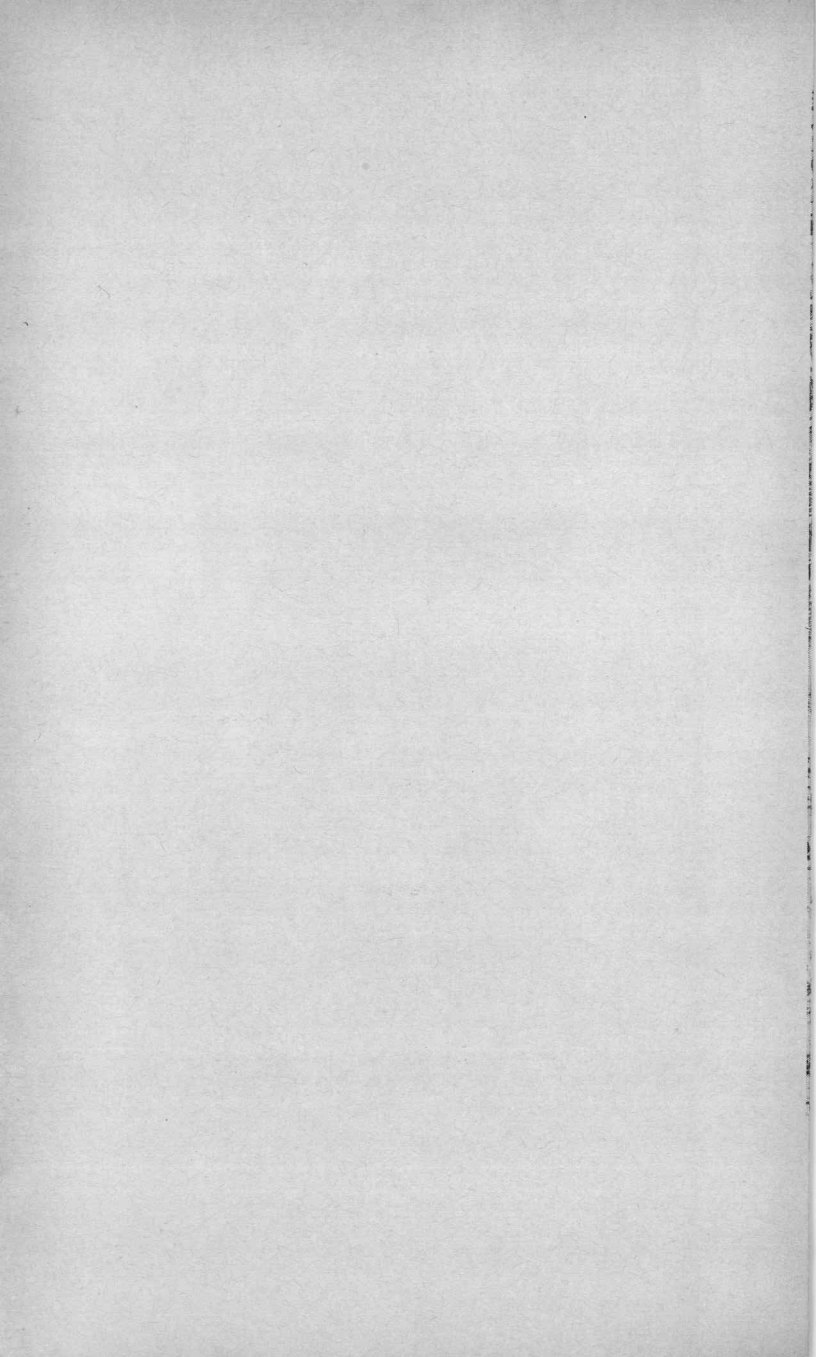
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TO THE MEMORY OF EILEEN POWER
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL
HISTORIAN



CONTENTS

PREFATORY NOTE TO THE
ILLUSTRATIONS 9

INTRODUCTION 11

1 SHAKESPEARE'S ENGLAND 1 15

THE TOWNS - THE COUNTRYSIDE -
CLASSES AND MODES OF LIFE -
WALES - THE NORTHERN COUNTIES -
ELIZABETHAN HOMES - INNS -
SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS - MILITIA -
LAW - J.P.S - POOR LAW

2 SHAKESPEARE'S ENGLAND 2 75

RELIGION AND UNIVERSITIES - THE
SOCIAL POLICY OF THE ELIZABETHAN
STATE - INDUSTRY AND SEAFARING -
SHAKESPEARE

3 THE ENGLAND OF CHARLES AND CROMWELL 133

THE BEGINNING OF COLONIAL
EXPANSION - EAST INDIA COMPANY -
FEN DRAINING - SOCIAL CONDITIONS
AND CONSEQUENCES OF THE GREAT
REBELLION - HOUSEHOLD LIFE

4 RESTORATION ENGLAND 211

Contents

MAP OF LATE TUDOR AND EARLY
STUART LONDON 278

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES TO THE
ILLUSTRATIONS 280

INDEX 327

PREFATORY NOTE TO THE ILLUSTRATIONS

The choice of illustrations for this volume has been guided by the same principles as in Volume One, that is to say, they have been drawn as far as possible from English work (or from that of foreign artists working in England), and from sources as nearly contemporary as possible with the scenes they represent.

There has, perforce, been a change in the type of sources used; whereas MSS. supplied the greater part of the illustrative commentary for the medieval and early Tudor period in Volume One, printed books and engravings, ballads, broadsides, and tracts largely provide the material for the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

I have found it necessary to use such foreign books as the *Civitates orbis terrarum* and Agricola's *De re metallica*, the former, with its detailed maps and plans, because it provides unrivalled views of English city layout in the sixteenth century, and the latter, because it is the only source known to me of sixteenth-century mining scenes and appropriate in that German mining practice was applied in England at this date. Similarly, I have let de Bry's engravings speak for Virginia [69] and Augustine Ryther's for the Armada [57, 58],¹ both being based on English drawings.

Artists working in a country not their own often bring to their work an interestingly different view of the people or scenes they are depicting, no less so in Zuccaro's crayon drawing of Elizabeth [42], where the simplicity of effect serves

1. Figures in square brackets refer to illustrations in the text.

to concentrate the interest in the Queen's face and personality; rather than in her jewels and royal trappings.

As in Volume One, later drawings and modern photographs have been freely used to illustrate places as distinct from social scenes, but care has been taken to distinguish and specify in the descriptive notes any features of a later date that occur – thus in Twopenny's drawing of the Great Gallery at Powys Castle [23], reference to the note will show that while the rich decoration of the plaster ceiling and frieze is original work of 1592–3, the panelling, furniture, and busts belong to varying and later dates. Grimm's sketches of Portland stone quarrying have been used though they belong to the eighteenth century, but neither the method of quarrying nor transport had changed very radically since Wren's time.

Air photographs have played an important part in this volume in making it possible to exhibit the layout of the great houses of the period or the features of a whole area – Montacute and Moreton Old Hall [17, 20] can thus contrast their style and setting, the Cheviots [12] lay bare their almost primeval wildness, and the floods of 1947 allow a momentary glimpse of the watery solitudes and oozy islands of the medieval fen [9]. For the rest, contemporary printed books, etchings, and engravings have been used to illustrate as many sides as possible of English life and activities, while portraits record for us at least some of those who left the imprint of their thoughts or discoveries upon their times.

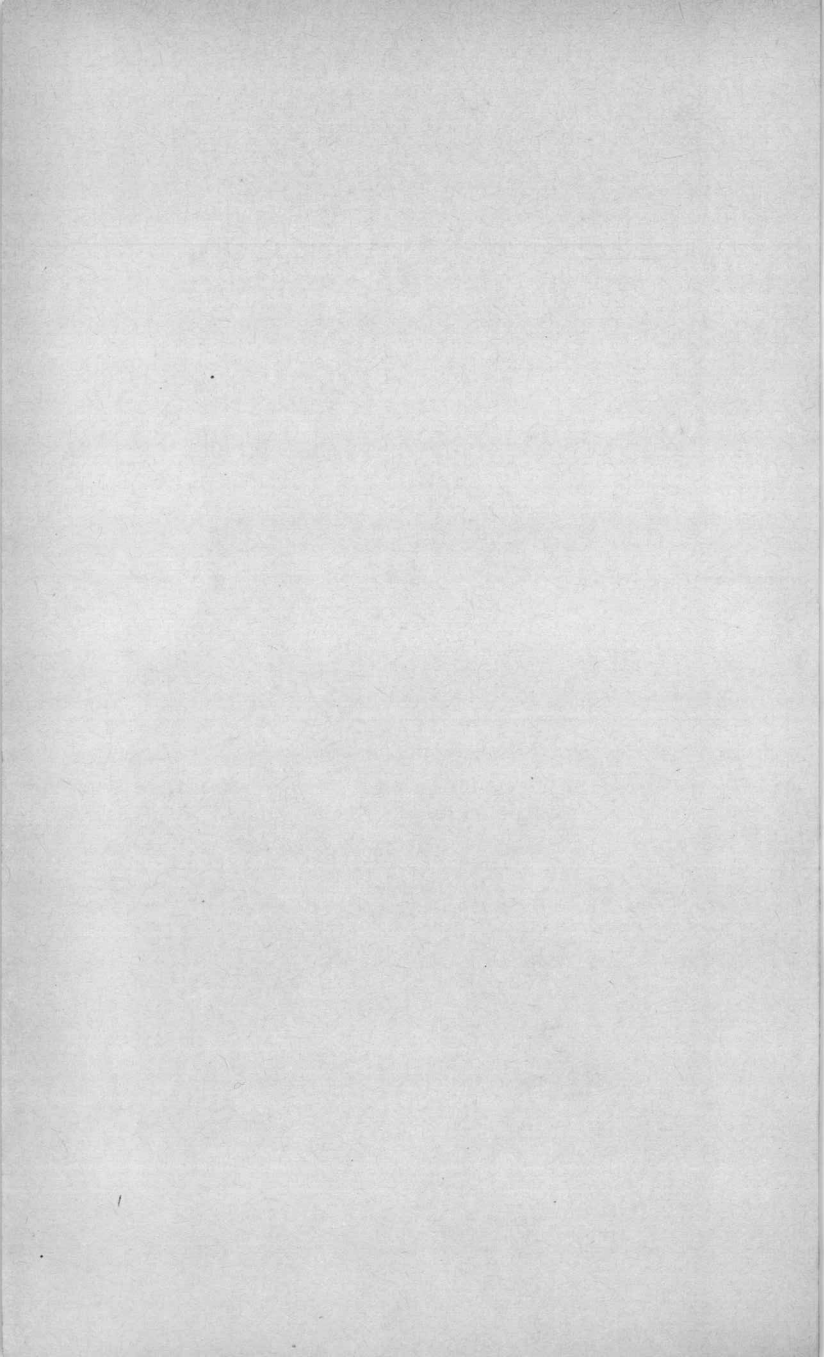
Detailed notes as in Volume One will be found at the end of the book, giving sources of the illustrations, their authorship, and present ownership, and pointing out any noteworthy features, either in the illustrations themselves or in their history.

I should like to take this opportunity to thank Sir Henry Hake, Director of the National Portrait Gallery, and his Assistant, Mr C. K. Adams, for their advice and guidance in the selection of the earliest or most authentic portraits of the people illustrated in this volume, and also Miss Hamilton Jones, Librarian of Aerofilms Ltd, who has been indefatigable in her efforts to secure the air photographs I wanted.

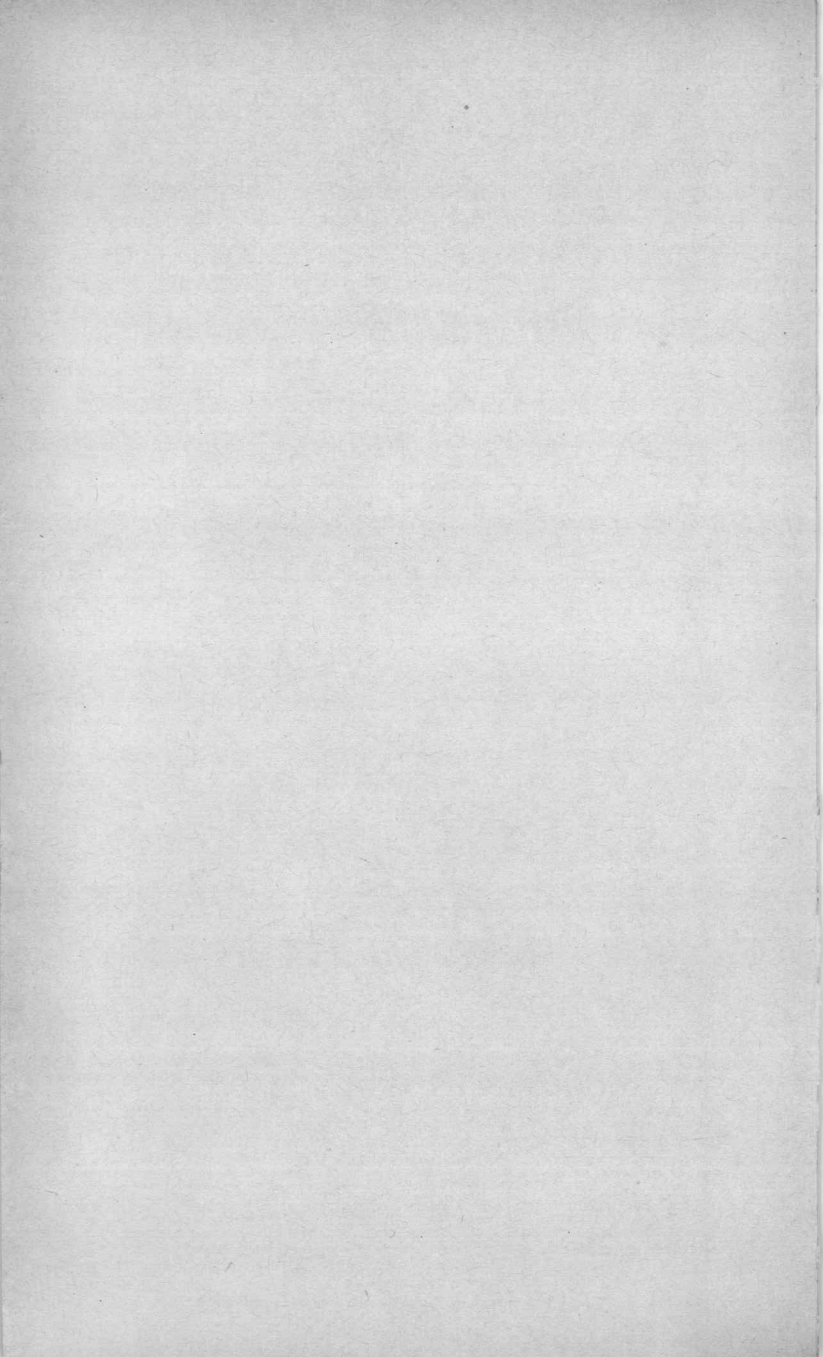
RUTH C. WRIGHT

INTRODUCTION

This second volume of the illustrated edition of my *English Social History* covers both the Elizabethan and the Stuart eras. Although the latter half of the period witnessed a series of political revolutions, the economic and social aspects of life as here described are characterized by fruition and steady growth. There are no such rapid changes as those which began in the following century and are called the 'Industrial Revolution'. The harmony of the economic and social structure in the Stuart era was certainly one reason why England was able to survive the violent political and religious strife of the period, and arrive at a peaceable adjustment of these quarrels at the end of the seventeenth century. If the struggle of King and Parliament for power had not been settled before we were involved in the economic and social upheavals of the Industrial Revolution, we should not have got through so well, as the later history of France, Germany, and Russia suggests.



The publishers' grateful thanks are due to all those who have given permission for photographs to be taken of the MSS., printed books, pictures or antiquities in their care or ownership, or have allowed photographs in their possession to be reproduced. Full details of such ownership, etc., will be found in the descriptive notes for each item.



CHAPTER ONE: 1564-1616

SHAKESPEARE'S ENGLAND 1

THE TOWNS - THE COUNTRYSIDE -
CLASSES AND MODES OF LIFE - WALES -
THE NORTHERN COUNTIES - ELIZABETHAN
HOMES - INNS - SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS -
MILITIA - LAW - J.P.S - POOR LAW

QUEEN ELIZABETH, 1558-1603

THE ARMADA, 1588

After the economic and religious unrest of the middle Tudor period, followed the golden age of England. Golden ages are not all of gold, and they never last long. But Shakespeare chanced upon the best time and country in which to live, in order to exercise with least distraction and most encouragement the highest faculties of man. The forest, the field, and the city were there in perfection, and all three are needed to perfect the poet. His countrymen, not yet cramped to the service of machines, were craftsmen and creators at will. Their minds, set free from medieval trammels, were not yet caught by Puritan or other modern fanaticisms. The Elizabethan English were in love with life, not with some theoretic shadow of life. Large classes, freed as never before from poverty, felt the upspring of the spirit and expressed it in wit, music, and song. The English language had touched its moment of fullest beauty and power. Peace and order at last prevailed in the land, even during the sea-war with Spain. Politics, so long a fear and oppression, and soon in other forms to be a fear and oppression again, were for a few decades simplified into service paid to a woman, who was to her subjects the symbol of their unity, prosperity, and freedom.

The Renaissance, that had known its springtime long ago in its native Italy, where biting frosts now nipped it, came late to its glorious summer in this northern isle. In the days of Erasmus, the Renaissance in England had been confined to scholars and to the King's Court. In Shakespeare's day it had

in some sort reached the people. The Bible and the world of classical antiquity were no longer left to the learned few. By the agency of the grammar schools, classicism filtered through from the study into the theatre and the street, from the folio to the popular ballad which familiarized the commonest auditories with *The Tyranny of Judge Appius* and *The Miserable State of King Midas* and the other great tales of Greece and Rome. The old Hebrew and the Graeco-Roman ways of life, raised from the grave of the remote past by the magic of scholarship, were opened to the general understanding of Englishmen, who treated them not as dead archaeological matter, but as new spheres of imagination and spiritual power, to be freely converted to modern use. While Shakespeare transformed Plutarch's *Lives* into his own *Julius Caesar* and *Antony*, others took the Bible and fashioned out of it a new way of life and thought for religious England.

And during these same fruitful years of Elizabeth, the narrow seas, amid whose tempests English mariners had for centuries been trained, expanded into the oceans of the world, where romance and wealth were to be won by adventurous youth, trading and fighting along newly discovered shores. Young, light-hearted England, cured at last of the Plantagenet itch to conquer France, became conscious of herself as an island with an ocean destiny, glad, after that Armada storm, to feel the safety and freedom that the guarded seas could give, while the burden of distant Empire was not yet laid upon her shoulders.

There is, of course, another side to all this, as there is to every picture of human well-being and well-doing. The cruel habits of centuries past were not easily or quickly to be shed. The overseas activity of the Elizabethans paid no regard to the rights of the Negroes whom they transported into slavery, or the Irish whom they robbed and slaughtered: some even of the noblest English, like John Hawkins on the Gold Coast and Edmund Spenser in Ireland, failed to see what dragons' teeth they were helping to sow. At home, the woman hunted by her neighbours as a witch, the Jesuit missionary mounting the scaffold to be cut to pieces alive, the Unitarian burning at the stake [1], the Puritan dissenter hanged or 'laden with irons in dangerous and loathsome gaols', had little joy of the great era.